<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

Please amend Claims 1, 10 and 19 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A human eye detection method comprising the following steps:

a) inputting an image;

b) analyzing the image and getting a candidate eye area;

c) determining a ~~neighborhood~~ region ~~in the image of the candidate eye area~~based on the candidate eye area, said ~~neighborhood~~ region being a region encompassing the candidate eye area and the center of said region being the center of the candidate eye area;

d) calculating the ~~neighborhood~~ region's size, which is recorded as S;

e) detecting dark areas in the ~~neighborhood~~ region and counting the number of dark areas, which number is recorded as N; and

f) comparing the ratio N/S to a predetermined first threshold[[;]], wherein if the ratio N/S is smaller than said first threshold, the candidate eye area is judged to be a real eye area; else, the candidate eye area is judged to be a false eye area.

2. (Previously Presented) The human eye detection method according to claim 1, characterized in that the method further comprises the step of:

determining candidate face areas on the basis of said judged candidate eye area obtained from said step f).

3-4. (Canceled)

5.   (Previously Presented) The human eye detection method according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that, step e), executes a binarization processing for detecting the dark areas.

6-7.   (Canceled)

8.   (Previously Presented) The human eye detection method according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising a threshold calculating step before the step f), for calculating said first threshold.

9.   (Canceled)

10.   (Currently Amended) A human eye detection apparatus comprising:

an input unit that inputs an image; and

a processor that (i) analyzes the image to obtain a candidate eye area; (ii) determines a neighborhood region in the image of the candidate eye area, the ~~neighborhood~~ region based on the candidate eye area being a region encompassing the candidate eye area and the center of said region being the center of the candidate eye area, (iii) calculates the ~~neighborhood~~ region's size S, (iv) detects dark areas in the ~~neighborhood~~ region and determines the total count N of dark areas in the neighborhood region, (v) and compares the ratio N/S to a predetermined first threshold, wherein if the ratio N/S is smaller than ~~the~~the first threshold, the candidate eye area is judged to be a real eye area, else the candidate eye area is judged to be a false eye area .

11.   (Previously Presented) A human eye detection apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein said processor executes a binarization processing to detect the dark areas.

12-18. (Canceled)

19.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium embodying program codes for causing an apparatus to perform a human eye detection method comprising:

inputting an image;

analyzing the image and getting a candidate eye area;

determining a ~~neighborhood~~ region based on the candidate eye area~~in the image of the candidate eye area~~, the ~~neighborhood~~ region being a region encompassing the candidate eye area and the center of said region being the center of the candidate eye area;

calculating the ~~neighborhood~~ region's size, which is recorded as S;

detecting dark areas in the ~~neighborhood~~ region and counting the number of dark areas, which number is recorded as N; and

comparing the ratio N/S to a predetermined first threshold, wherein if the ration N/S is smaller than the first threshold, the candidate eye area is judged to be a real eye area, else he candidate eye area is judged to be a false eye area.

20.   (Canceled)

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